

Application No.: 09/839,664
Response to FOA of 11/25/05

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of the claims:

1. (currently amended) A method of validating an e-ticket, comprising the steps of:
 - a) sending the e-ticket from an initial receiving server S_i to a plurality of servers including S_i , wherein each server returns an answer indicative of whether that server previously answered an inquiry for the e-ticket;
 - b) collecting the identities of the answering servers in an answer set;
 - c) broadcasting the e-ticket and the answer set to the plurality of servers, if at least one server previously answered an inquiry for the e-ticket; and
 - d) collecting the identity of any server S_k broadcasting the e-ticket and an associated answer set in a second answer set, upon receipt of the broadcast, wherein step d) is repeated as long as S_i has not received its own broadcast and there is no server S_k in the second answer set such that the associated answer set is a subset of the second answer set.
2. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein step b) is performed until a majority of servers has answered.
3. (canceled)
4. (previously presented) The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of:
 - e) accepting the e-ticket if S_i receives its own broadcast and the answer set is a subset of the second answer set.
5. (previously presented) The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of:
 - d) rejecting the e-ticket if S_i has received its own broadcast and the answer set is not a subset of the second answer set.
6. (currently amended) ~~The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of:~~

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A method of validating an e-ticket, comprising the steps of:

- a) sending the e-ticket from an initial receiving server S_i to a plurality of servers including S_i , wherein each server returns an answer indicative of whether that server previously answered an inquiry for the e-ticket;
- b) collecting the identities of the answering servers in an answer set;
- c) broadcasting the e-ticket and the answer set to the plurality of servers, if at least one server previously answered an inquiry for the e-ticket;
- d) collecting the identity of any server S_k broadcasting the e-ticket and an associated answer set in a second answer set, upon receipt of the broadcast; and
- e) rejecting the e-ticket if the answer set is a subset of the second answer set and S_i has not received its own broadcast.

7. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein the e-ticket represents a prior reservation of goods or services.

8. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein the e-ticket contains no information specifically identifying the owner.

9. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein broadcasts are performed in accordance with a selected one of a pure atomic broadcast, a general broadcast, a CT-broadcast, and an OPT-broadcast protocol.

10. (currently amended) A method of validating an e-ticket, comprising the steps of:

- a) sending the e-ticket from an initial receiving server S_i to a plurality of servers including S_i , wherein each server returns an answer indicative of whether that server previously answered any inquiry for the e-ticket;
- b) selecting a conflict mode if at least one selected server of a majority of servers answered a previous inquiry for the e-ticket; and
- c) selecting a conflict-free mode if none of the majority of servers has answered any previous inquiry for the e-ticket, wherein step b) further comprises the steps of:
 - i) broadcasting the e-ticket and the answer set to the plurality of servers; and

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ii) collecting the identity of any server S_k broadcasting the e-ticket and an associated answer set in a second answer set upon receipt of the broadcast; and wherein step b) (ii) is repeated as long as S_i has not received its own broadcast and there is no server S_k in the second answer set such that the associated answer set \subseteq the second answer set.

11. (original) The method of claim 10 wherein step c) further comprises the step of:

i) accepting the e-ticket.

12. (currently amended) The method of claim 10 further comprising the step of:

d) collecting the identities of the answering servers in an answer set.

13. (canceled)

14. (canceled)

15. (currently amended) The method of claim 10-14 further comprising the step of accepting the e-ticket if S_i receives its own broadcast and the answer set \subseteq the second answer set.

16. (currently amended) The method of claim 10-14 further comprising the step of rejecting the e-ticket if S_i has received its own broadcast and the answer set is not a subset of the second answer set.

17. (currently amended) The method of claim 10-14 further comprising the step of:

d) rejecting the e-ticket if the answer set \subseteq the second answer set and S_i has not received its own broadcast.

18. (original) The method of claim 10 wherein the e-ticket represents a prior reservation of goods or services.

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19. (original) The method of claim 13 wherein broadcasts are performed in accordance with a selected one of a pure atomic broadcast, a general broadcast, a CT-broadcast, and an OPT-broadcast protocol.